

Chapter 1: Social Class in America

Test Bank

Multiple Choice

1. The concept _____ refers to the ways people can move within the class system.

- A. social movement
- B. social mobility
- C. social stratification
- D. social chances

Ans: B

2. The concept _____ is used to refer to social ranking based on wealth, occupation, or prestige.

- A. social class
- B. social group
- C. social stratification
- D. social chances

Ans: C

3. Which social theorist argued that there were two social classes in society characterized by their relationship to the means of production?

- A. Lee Rainwater
- B. Karl Marx
- C. Max Weber
- D. Lloyd Warner

Ans: B

4. The social class that must sell their labor for a wage in order to survive is referred to as the _____.

- A. capitalist class
- B. bourgeoisie
- C. middle class
- D. proletariat

Ans: D

5. The social class that owns the means of production is referred to as the _____.

- A. proletariat
- B. working class
- C. middle class
- D. bourgeoisie

Ans: D

6. Karl Marx argued that social classes were defined by their relationship to the _____.

- A. mode of production
- B. means of production
- C. affluent
- D. labor force

Ans: B

7. The mode of production characterized by the dominance of the owners of industry over the mass of industrial workers is called _____

- A. feudalism
- B. capitalism
- C. communism
- D. socialism

Ans: B

8. _____ is the technologically advanced, classless society of the future, in which all productive property would be held in common.

- A. Socialism
- B. Capitalism
- C. Feudalism
- D. Communism

Ans: D

9. What is the concept Marx used to describe the pervasive ideas that uphold the status quo and sustain the ruling class?

- A. means of production
- B. class consciousness
- C. ideology
- D. persuasion

Ans: C

10. It was in the work _____ that Marx most completely explained his beliefs on class including the idea that "[t]he history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."

- A. *The Power Elite*
- B. *American Elites*
- C. *The Affluent Society*
- D. *Communist Manifesto*

Ans: D

11. Marx believed that a new social class had been created by the capitalist mode of production. Which of the following is that class?

- A. the working poor
- B. the urban working class
- C. the agrarian elite
- D. the agrarian working class

Ans: B

12. Which of the following is *not* one of the preconditions for the development of a class consciousness?

- A. the identification of a leader
- B. the deprived living conditions of members of the working class
- C. the geographic concentration of large masses of industrial workers
- D. the simplification of the class structure that occurs during capitalism

Ans: A

13. Which social theorist distinguished between class and status?

- A. Max Weber
- B. Emile Durkheim
- C. Karl Marx
- D. Dennis Gilbert

Ans: A

14. The fundamental aspects of an individual's future possibilities that are shaped by class membership are called _____.

- A. life options
- B. life goals
- C. life chances
- D. life changes

Ans: C

15. According to Weber, it is a(n) _____ that shares the same economically shaped life chances.

- A. ideology
- B. social class
- C. lifestyle
- D. status

Ans: B

16. According to Weber, _____ is ranking by social prestige.

- A. ideology
- B. social class
- C. lifestyle
- D. status

Ans: D

17. According to Weber, status groups share a(n) _____.

- A. ideology
- B. social class
- C. lifestyle
- D. status

Ans: C

18. Which of the following is one of the three broad issues in the study of social class based on Marx's and Weber's work suggested in the textbook?

- A. occupational basis
- B. economic basis
- C. ideological basis
- D. religious basis

Ans: B

19. Your textbook defines _____ as "groups of families or households, more or less equal in rank and differentiated from other families above or below them with regard to characteristics such as occupation, income, wealth, and prestige."

- A. life chances
- B. the political elite
- C. class consciousness
- D. social classes

Ans: D

20. In the Gilbert–Kahl model of the class structure, the group located directly beneath the capitalist class is the _____.

- A. upper-upper class
- B. lower-upper class
- C. upper-middle class
- D. lower-middle class

Ans: C

21. According to the Gilbert–Kahl model of the class structure, what class derives its income largely from return on assets?

- A. upper-upper class
- B. capitalist class
- C. upper-middle class
- D. middle class

Ans: B

22. The Gilbert–Kahl model of the class structure is built around _____.

- A. amount of income
- B. amount of wealth
- C. source of wealth
- D. source of income

Ans: D

23. In the Gilbert–Kahl model of class structure, which of the social classes is most likely to be university educated?

- A. working poor
- B. working class
- C. middle class

D. upper-middle class

Ans: D

24. When did class inequalities rise steeply in the latter half of the 20th century?

A. late 1990s

B. early 1980s

C. mid-1970s

D. 1950s and 1960s

Ans: C

25. The years between 1946 and approximately 1973 are referred to in the text as the _____.

A. Age of Growing Inequality

B. Age of Decreasing Inequality

C. Age of Shared Prosperity

D. Age of Increasing Inequality

Ans: C

True/False

1. There is a positive relationship between social class and life chances.

Ans: T

2. According to Marx, in modern capitalist societies, social classes tend toward internal homogeneity.

Ans: T

3. Marx regarded production as the center of social life.

Ans: T

4. Marx regarded the means of production as the main determinant of a society's superstructure of social and political institutions and ideas.

Ans: F

5. Marx named the social class that owned the means of production the bourgeoisie.

Ans: T

6. Marx used the term ideology, to describe the pervasive ideas that uphold the status quo and sustain the ruling class.

Ans: T

7. Weber knew the work of Marx but reached different conclusions.

Ans: F

8. Weber believed that modern societies were characterized by two distinct social classes.

Ans: F

9. Weber argued that status differences generally supported the development of class consciousness and class struggle.

Ans: F

10. A status order tends to restrict the freedom of the market, not only by its monopolization of certain types of consumption goods but also by its monopolization of the opportunities to earn money.

Ans: T

11. Communism is characterized by the dominance of the owners of industry over the mass of industrial workers.

Ans: F

12. There is no single correct model of the American class structure.

Ans: T

13. Class inequalities in the United States increased during the 1950s and 1960s.

Ans: F

14. According to your textbook, it is now analytically more appropriate to emphasize the division between the capitalist and upper-middle classes and the classes below them.

Ans: T

15. Heterosexual, married couple families are increasingly dependent on the incomes of husbands.

Ans: F

16. The Gilbert-Kahl model stratifies the population into six classes and one subclass.

Ans: T

17. The years since 1975 are referred to as the Age of Growing Inequality.

Ans: T

18. Social revolutions have typically occurred in peasant societies during the early stages of industrialization under foreign influence rather than in the advanced industrial countries where Marx anticipated them.

Ans: T

19. According to Weber, there are three social classes in society: an upper class, a middle class, and a lower class.

Ans: F

20. According to the Gilbert-Kahl model, the two largest classes are the middle class and the working class.

Ans: F

Essay

1. Explain the differences between Marx and Weber in terms of how they define the nature of social class.

Ans: In Marx's work, social classes are defined by their distinctive relationships to the means of production. Taking this approach, Marx defined two classes in the emerging industrial societies of his own time: the capitalist class (or bourgeoisie) and the working class (or proletariat). He describes the bourgeoisie as the class that owns the means of production, such as mines or factories, and the proletariat as the class of those who must sell their labor to the owners of the means to earn a wage and stay alive. Marx maintained that in modern, capitalist society, each of these two basic classes tends toward an internal homogeneity that obliterates differences within them. Weber made a crucial distinction between two orders of ranking or stratification: class and status. Class had roughly the same meaning for both Weber and Marx. It refers to groupings of people according to their economic position. Class situation or membership, according to Weber, is defined by the individual's strength in economic markets (e.g., the job market or capital markets), to the extent that these determine individual life chances. By life chances, he meant the fundamental aspects of an individual's future possibilities that are shaped by class membership, from the infant's chances for decent nutrition to the adult's opportunities for worldly success.

2. According to Marx, how does class consciousness develop?

Ans: Among the factors he isolated were the stark simplification of the class order in the course of capitalist development; the concentration of large masses of workers in the new industrial towns; the deprivations of working-class people, exacerbated by the inherent instability of the capitalist economy; and the political sophistication gained by the proletariat through participation in working-class organizations such as labor unions and mass political parties.

3. According to Marx, how do privileged minorities maintain their positions and contain the potential resistance of exploited majorities?

Ans: Marx's reply was that the class that controls the means of production typically controls the means of compulsion and persuasion--the superstructure. He observed that in feudal times, the landowners monopolized military and political power. With the rise of modern capitalism, the bourgeoisie gained control of political institutions. In each case, the privileged class could use the power of the state to protect its own interests.

4. Describe the nature of the relationship between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Ans: The capitalist class (or bourgeoisie) and the working class (or proletariat). He describes the bourgeoisie as the class that owns the means of production, such as

mines or factories, and the proletariat as the class of those who must sell their labor to the owners of the means to earn a wage and stay alive.

5. In the Gilbert–Kahl model of class structure, how do the sources of income differ depending on where one is situated in the social class hierarchy?

Ans: A very small top class, whose income derives largely from return on assets--the capitalist class. Then multiple class distinctions among the nonpropertied majority below the capitalist class. Most depend not on income from assets but income from jobs. They sort them into classes based on the occupation of the principal income earner in each household.

The working poor are employed at very low-skill, low-wage, often insecure jobs that do not pay benefits such as health insurance. Because their jobs are poorly paid, precarious, and devoid of benefits, their lives are marked by financial instability. Members of the underclass may have job income, but they are likely to work part-time or erratically. They may be dependent on public assistance or disability payments. A few draw income from criminal activities.